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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 GEORGETOWN 000138

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SUBJECT: GUYANA PASSES WORLD CUP LEGISLATION - BETTER LATE THAN NEVER:

REF: GEORGETOWN 00117

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**¶11.** (SBU) SUMMARY: Guyana's National Assembly unanimously passed four bills allowing Guyana to participate fully with the nine other Caribbean Community (CARICOM) countries in a Single Domestic Space for the upcoming Cricket World Cup (CWC). The four bills were: (1) Immigration (Amendment) Act ; (2) Caribbean Community Special Visa Agreement Act; (3) Pre-Clearance Act; and (4) the Customs (Amendment) Act. The bills were passed the evening of January 31, just hours before the CARICOM Single Domestic Space went into effect.

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APIS LEGISLATION PASSED  
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**¶12.** (U) The Immigration (Amendment) Act, makes provisions for the introduction of the Advanced Passenger Information System (APIS). Under this bill, it is obligatory that the master of any vessel, whether aircraft or ship, arriving at any place in Guyana, must transmit passenger information to the immigration authorities in Guyana within the time specified. Failure to transmit the information required or transmitting incomplete or false information is an offense and is liable to a fine of G\$20 million ( US\$100,000). Minister of Home Affair Clement Rohee told the National Assembly that this sharing of passenger information, even after CWC 2007, and border security were among the benefits and legacy of Guyana hosting this event.

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SPECIAL VISA FOR CWC  
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**¶13.** (U) The CARICOM Special Visa Agreement Act provides for special visas to facilitate travel to host venues from February 1 to May 15, 2007 after which they become invalid. The act gives legal effect to the CARICOM Special Visa Agreement which came into force December 12, 2006. This agreement provided for state parties to adopt a common policy on the arrangements for a CARICOM special visa and the harmonization of policies for the visa. In total, 23 countries will be affected, the majority of which Guyana had no-visa agreements. The special visa fee of US \$100, however, has caused some controversy among CWC participant countries.

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EASY TRAVEL FOR CWC TEAMS, OFFICIALS, AND MEDIA  
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**¶4.** (U) The Pre-Clearance Act allows for unimpeded travel for teams, officials, media and sponsors (TOMS) during the CWC. The new pre-clearance law gives legal effect to an agreement between Guyana and other CWC hosts on the pre-clearance of passengers and goods for the purpose of CWC 2007. Under the legislation, Guyana will designate a pre-clearance area at the Cheddi Jagan International Airport to facilitate TOMS, who are subjected to the country's entry rules and regulations.

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CUSTOMS LAW  
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**¶5.** (U) The Customs (Amendment) Act makes provision for the Minister of Finance to make regulations requiring any master of an aircraft or ship expected to arrive in Guyana or expected to depart from Guyana to furnish advance information relating to any passenger or cargo or both on board such craft in the form and manner as may be provided in the regulations. Like the immigration law, the customs amendment law makes provisions for a fine not exceeding G\$20 million in cases where a master of an aircraft or ship intentionally fails, or recklessly furnishes incomplete or false advance information.

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GUYANA'S MOTO: BETTER LATE THAN NEVER  
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**¶6.** (SBU) COMMENT: Much like the frantic last-minute preparations for the August 2007 national elections, Guyana

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has waited until less than two months from the start of the CWC to finally take action. While they were able to push through the necessary legislation with only hours to spare, it remains an open question whether they will finish the other required preparations for the games. A quick glance around Georgetown finds that the new hotels, roadwork and transportation infrastructure for the CWC are yet to be completed.

Robinson